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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY USSR


SUBJECT Present Position of Marshal Zhukov

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1. On 8 Nov 53, Marshal G. K. Zhukov was present at the reception given by Molotov in honor of the anniversary of the Revolution. Immediately thereafter Marshal Zhukov left for Minsk to inspect the old Stalin line of fortifications on the old Polish-Soviet border. The Soviet Government intends to rehabilitate this line, but due to the dissatisfaction given by the fortifications on the occasion of the German attack in 1941, the line will be extended in depth and new units added.
2. In the Soviet military hierarchy Marshal Zhukov is subordinate to Marshal A. M. Vassilevski, First Deputy Minister of Defense. But due to the sympathy he commands in the high command and the general staff, Zhukov is still the most powerful personality among the wartime heroes of the Soviet Army.
3. The relations between Zhukov and the Soviet political military leaders, such as Voroshilov and Bulganin are rather cold, and Zhukov has still not become reconciled to Malenkov, who dislikes him as too nationalistic and too pro-Western. But in the struggle against Beria and his supporters within the army, the help of Zhukov and his popularity became necessary to Malenkov, and the latter was forced to permit his promotion.
4. It cannot be confirmed that Zhukov is concerned with the elaboration of the new strategic plan for an offensive toward the Middle East. This has been entrusted to L. A. Govorov. But it is possible that Marshal V. D. Sokolovski will be unable to take over the command of the Far East, in which case Govorov will have to replace him. If this happens, but only if it happens, it is planned to entrust Zhukov with the command of the whole south and central zone of the Soviet Union,

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including both Europe and the Middle East. The final decision on these points will not be taken until late in the spring of 1954, when the situation of EDC in Europe has been clarified.

5. Zhukov's future position also depends somewhat upon the attitude of Col. Gen. A. G. Yeltov, head of the political bureau of the army, who is inimical to Zhukov and who is gaining great power in the Soviet high command. Yeltov is trying to isolate Zhukov by promoting young newcomers, recommended by the Party, to high commands, especially in the technical arms.
6. Zhukov is still only a substitute on the Central Committee of the Party, while Vasilevski, Sokolovski and Koniev are full members. Zhukov's candidacy for full membership was opposed by Khrushchev.

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